



News Release

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100 days after GE14: PM's approval rating at 71%, Government 67%

BANGI – Two-thirds of Malaysian voters gave the Pakatan Harapan federal government positive ratings in a survey carried out to mark one hundred days after the 14th general election.

It should be noted that the ratings were attained on the support of 79% ethnic Chinese voters, 89% ethnic Indian voters, 62% Sabah and Sarawak bumiputera, and 58% Malay voters.

The same survey also saw 71% of voters reporting as satisfied towards the performance of Dr Mahathir Mohamed as the country's Prime Minister. The Prime Minister obtained positive responses from 93% ethnic Indians, 83% ethnic Chinese, 75% non-Muslim Bumiputeras, 64% Muslim Bumiputeras, and 62% Malay voters, nationwide. It should be noted that he also gained high approval from among civil servants at 81%, and voters under 40 years old at about 73%.

Merdeka Center had continued to conduct surveys after the May 2018 general election and tracked the public approval ratings since late May 2018. The present numbers show a slight decline from the onset of the formation of the new government, indicating dissipating euphoria and the natural friction as expectations encounter reality. Nonetheless, the present positive numbers underpin the general satisfaction expressed by voters on the performance of the new government on a number of issues since taking power in May 2018.

Some strong positive indications include:

- 55% of voters believe that the country is now headed in the right direction, compared to 38% in April 2018;
- 60% of voters express satisfaction in the way the government is managing the economy now, up from 34% in April 2018;
- 56% of voters are optimistic about the prospects of the national economy compared to 31% in April 2018; and
- 56% of voters were satisfied with the overall performance of the PH government in fulfilling their election promises to date.

Additionally voters were also asked to rate their satisfaction on a number of different topics as follows:

- 82% were satisfied with the results of the 14th general election – this also included voters who chose other parties;
- 72% were satisfied with the efforts to reform government institutions;
- 69% positive on measures to improve inter-ethnic harmony;
- 65% on measures to fight corruption; but
- Only 48% was satisfied with government on how it intends to grow the economy; while

- Only 41% were satisfied with measures to address cost of living pressures while 55% were dissatisfied.

The economy remains top voter concern

As had been the case in the past, the state of the economy is the top most concern among voters, reported by 64% of those surveyed.

When asked to respond from a fixed list of issue items, the survey found that concerns over inflation or cost of living though still high at 50% had abated from the 57% recorded in April 2018. Meanwhile, concerns over matters related to race and religious rights increased from 12% to 21% during the same period.

The same survey found that about 50% of Malay voters were still satisfied with the PH government’s efforts to “protect the interests of their community”, as well as “protect the position of Islam”. We note however, those dissatisfied, however, were fairly sizable at 44% and 45%, respectively.

DPM leads approval ratings of key cabinet members

On the performance of selected key ministers, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Women, Community and Family Affairs , Dr Wan Azizah , recorded the highest approval rating at 75% satisfaction, followed by Azmin Ali, Minister of Economic Affairs at 64% satisfaction, and Muhyiddin Yassin , Minister of Home Affairs with 62% satisfaction. Details for other ministers (including the new attorney general), and along voter ethnic profile as follows:

	Satisfied %	Dissatisfied %	Satisfied % (Malay)	Satisfied % (Non-Malay)
Dr Wan Azizah , Deputy PM and Minister of Women & Family Affairs	75%	16%	71%	79%
Azmin Ali, Minister of Economic Affairs	64%	15%	68%	60%
Muhyuddin Yassin, Minister of Home Affairs	62%	18%	70%	49%
Lim Guan Eng, Minister of Finance	60%	28%	44%	84%
Mohamad Sabu, Minister of Defence	58%	22%	55%	62%
Dzukefly Ahmad, Minister of Health	53%	13%	60%	42%
Maszle Malik, Minister of Education	50%	28%	54%	41%
Tommy Thomas Attorney General	49%	25%	37%	67%

In our opinion, the survey results show a PH government that has won over a majority of the electorate despite coming in at less than 50% popular vote on election day. This has taken place on the back of their promised reform agenda, and voters’ dissatisfaction towards the previous

administration. A majority of voters appear satisfied with the new government's intent to reform and appear to accept that some promises could not be delivered within the first 100 days.

Heading into the future, the PH government will face the challenge of managing heightened public expectations, an opposition that is galvanizing rhetoric on race and religion, and managing coalition politics. The data also suggests that the PH government faces a Malay electorate that is more cautious when compared to their fellow citizens.

Moving beyond the 100 days, the survey suggests that to win over skeptics, the new government needs to demonstrate and amplify efforts at addressing the cost of living issues faced by ordinary Malaysians alongside introducing other substantive reform measures on government service delivery.

The survey was carried out by the Merdeka Center for Opinion Research between 7th to 14th August 2018 to gauge voters' perceptions of current developments. 1,160 registered voters comprising 52% Malay, 29% Chinese, 7% Indian, 6% Muslim Bumiputra, 6% Non- Muslim Bumiputra, (from Sabah and Sarawak) , reflective of the national electoral profile, were interviewed via fixed line and mobile telephones. Respondents were selected on the basis of random stratified sampling along age group, ethnicity, gender and state constituency. The poll was funded by Merdeka Center's internally generated financial resources.

About Merdeka Center for Opinion Research

Merdeka Center for Opinion Research was formally established in 2001 as an independent organization focused on public opinion research and socio-economic analysis. Merdeka's mission is to act as a bridge between ordinary Malaysians and other stakeholders with the leading members of the nation – by collecting public opinion studies and expressing them through survey results, analysis and position papers. For details, visit: www.merdeka.org

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